

**Radio Remarks on the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998**

*June 23, 1998*

Today I signed into law a new bill to help expand opportunity for America's farmers. The agricultural research act will put funding for crop insurance on a sure footing for the future and boost investment on agricultural research and rural development.

After Congress phased out Federal farm price supports, it became more essential for American farmers to sell grains, meats, fruits, and vegetables to markets around the world. And today, products from one of every three acres planted in America are sold abroad. Thanks to cutting-edge research, strong food safety standards, and innovations in biotechnology, our farmers enjoy advantages over their competitors around the world in many sectors. In fact, American farmers have become so productive and so advanced that agriculture should be considered another high-tech industry. By strengthening investment in research and technology, this bill will help our farmers retain that competitive edge so they can export more of what they grow and raise. But to secure the success of U.S. farmers in the global marketplace, we must do more.

That's why we're also fighting hard to tear down unfair trade barriers, to stabilize Asian markets for our products, and to make sure that sanctions do not unfairly penalize American farmers. I've asked the World Trade Organization to take an aggressive approach to reducing tariffs and subsidies on agricultural products and to deliver better scientific-based rules to govern that trade. We're also fighting to enforce our trade agreements and have won critical agricultural disputes, including the European Union's restrictions on hormone-grown beef and greater access to pork in the Philippines. We will continue to use every tool at our disposal to ensure that agreements made are agreements kept.

And I will push Congress to give the IMF the resources it needs to help stabilize the economies of Asia, which are such big markets for American farm products. Finally, we need to make sure that our sanctions policy furthers our foreign policy goals without

hurting our farmers. That's why I support legislation that ensures that U.S. wheat will not be the unintended victim of an important nonproliferation law. Our policy has been and will be that food should not be used as a weapon. We'll resist any action that would lead to a de facto grain embargo.

American farmers can continue to compete and win the global marketplace. To make sure that they do, I'll continue to fight to make sure they're given a fair chance to build a better future for themselves and their families.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded on the morning of June 23 in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast.

**Statement on Signing Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998**

*June 23, 1998*

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1150, the "Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998." This bill is an example of the Federal Government at its best: the Congress and the Administration working together on a bipartisan basis, bringing together a broad coalition of individuals and groups to address the important needs of our citizens in a fiscally responsible manner. I want to thank Senators Lugar and Harkin and Representatives Smith and Stenholm, whose efforts to forge this compromise were tireless, as well as all the other Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives who voted for S. 1150. Their support reflects the strong consensus in this country for the reforms and funding contained in this bill.

S. 1150 and last year's Balanced Budget Act go a long way toward fulfilling the commitment, which I made when I signed the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, to reverse the unfair treatment of legal immigrants included in that legislation, which had nothing to do with welfare reform. The Food Stamp provisions of S. 1150 restore benefits to 250,000 elderly, disabled, and other needy legal immigrants, including 75,000 children who lost such assistance under the 1996 Act.